

Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Magaghah and Al-Adwa - Magaghah

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The legal ecclesiastical opinion, on the ordination and service, of girls, virgins, and widows, in the Church.

an introduction:

we feel sorry that some people accuse the Church, in its teachings relating to women, of being strict against her, and of distinguishing men from her, and of distinguishing boys from girls, and that these teachings that are specific to women, and the discrimination between children, are recent, and have not been since ancient times. or since the founding of the Church.

Just as some people accuse the Church and its teachings of being strict against women and girls, and of distinguishing men and children from their sons, so they accuse some clergymen and male and female servants, who know the faith and teachings of the Church, live it and teach it, of being strict, petrifying, reactionary and backward, and even more difficult than all of these qualities. They call them, the nickname of the Orthodox ISIS

Despite that, I tell you, my brothers, let them say and accuse as they wish, but we must prove and adhere to the faith of our Church, and not deceive our consciences to walk in masks and go along with the wrong teachings and their adherents.

Therefore, we reject these erroneous teachings and condemn them, and we judge them and their companions, as being wrong and not right. There will come a time when God and history will judge the wrong teachings and their owners, as well as the correct teachings and their companions, according to God's faithful promise that: "He will reward each one according to his deeds" (Matthew 16:27), (Revelation 22:12), (Psalm 62:12).

* With reference to the Book of Synodal Decisions, during the reign of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III - Third Edition (pg. 147, p. 148, p. 359, p. 360).

First - In the session of 6/13/1992 AD, regarding the consecration of women and its rite, and Their service - Annex No. 17 B:

The Holy Synod, headed by His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, decided in these regulations:

1- In the rite of our Coptic Orthodox Church, there are no servant nuns, but consecrated deaconesses

- 2- A woman may be consecrated, in a consecrated service, or an assistant deacon, or a deaconess, giving the necessary warning not to serve the altar, or to perform any priestly work, and the necessary warnings
- 3- The woman teaches in the church, in the meetings of women or children, and she should not teach men in the church, according to the commandment of the Apostle Paul
- 4- The present priest or deacons read the chapters, and that is in the liturgies for nuns or girls, as it is not permissible for them to do the reading
- 5- The consecration of girls is by the knowledge of a bishop's father, not one of the priests.
- 6- The consecrated one is not consecrated, like deacons of men, after the prayer of reconciliation in the Mass, because they do not serve the altar
- 7- The notes contained in the rite of consecrations are an integral part of this rite
- 8- Deaconesses, the priest, can cooperate in baptism, without them being baptized, of course
- 9- A woman can clean the nave, not the altar.
- 10- she also performs other services such as elderly women, expatriates, and other services mentioned in the report, and not any priestly duties.
- 11- The time of consecration takes place, after early ecclesiology, and before the incense is raised, and the pronouncement of the consecrated word so and so begins, or the assistant deacon or deaconess, and in the consecration of the full deacon, the bishop pronounces, we invite you, O so and so, deacon, in the Coptic Orthodox Church of God. The bishop does not use the word we invite you

12- The consecration signs are mentioned, without specifying a particular church.

13- That these prayers take place in a special mass attended by women, because their service is not for all the people, but for a specific section of them, and it is possible for the consecrated family to attend, the prayers of their consecration and the Divine Liturgy.

Secondly - In the session of 5/6/1993 AD, the Holy Synod decided to approve the proposed rite of assistance to the deaconess (p. 148), and the attached Annex No. 17 c, (p. 369-371):

* What was said about the rite of the consecration, in all its aspects, is also said about the rite of assisting the deaconess, and it is called the Epi-diakone.

Third - In the session of 6/6/1998 AD (pg. 148, pg. 149), headed by His Holiness the Pope, the Synod approved the rite of consecration of the full deaconess

Provided that the preamble to the rite should be placed with the phrase: “The full deacon has absolutely nothing to do with the altar service.”

The rite is attached to the aspects of her service as a full deacon, linked to the rite of the full deacon's residence, attached to Annex 17-D, (pp. 372-382).

+ The prayers of consecration to the full deaconess, after raising early incense, take place in a special liturgy, attended by only women, and her family if desired (p. 375).

+ As for the full-service of the deaconess, it is limited to serving women and children. Examples of these are:

1- Assisting the priest in baptizing elderly women, not in the rites, nor the prayer, but in the care. Because the priest does not have to, except to place his hand, on the head of the baptized woman, while she is inside Baptism, and immerses her in baptismal water 3 times, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and after her exit, she puts on her clothes, then the priest comes and gives her the sacrament of chrism, anointing her on the visible parts only of her body, and improving the presence of a deaconess, to help her work before the request for baptism and after baptism

2- Maintaining order in the places where women sit in the church.

3- Organizing communion: they must make sure that they are Orthodox Christians, practicing the sacrament of confession regularly. To receive communion, and thus help the priest in the communion of the women

4- Helping in the service of young women and women, in their meetings, and in the church.

5- visiting young women and women, urging them to attend church, masses and meetings

6- Serving in a child's schools, attracting them to the church with her tenderness

7- Serving in the church's nursery, as it is more humane than bearing the child, filling him with tenderness and love, and helping to raise him, a Christian church upbringing.

8- Work in the field of social service in the church, for example: serving widows, the needy and the poor, an integrated service

9- Serving in homes for orphan children (shelters), as you assume the role of a mother, for those who have been deprived of motherhood when they are young

10- Working in the homes of old men and women, served by them with sacrificial services, such as eating, drinking, cleaning and nursing, and all their many needs, and the possibility of their harassment, because of their illness and old age.

11- Visiting sick women, whether in their homes or hospitals, and offering them the kind and comforting word that is fulfilled, with service and aid, and speaking to them the word of God. It represents the Church in caring for them, and informs the priest of the cases that need to be visited or addressed

12- Supervising the activities of women in the church, including concerns, exhibitions, etc.

13- Supervising the cleanliness of the church and arranging its furniture, except for the altar, because women are not allowed to enter it

14- Supervising the administrative aspects of infirmaries affiliated to churches or

15- Supervising the homes of expatriate female students, who are in dire need of these homes and Christian care, for their preservation, protection and success.

16- Serving cases of delinquency among young women, which need spiritual care, under the guidance of the clergy

17- Serving women with special needs, as it helps them lead a normal, spiritual and psychological life, and does not serve disabled males.

Some of the Fathers say that His Holiness Pope Shenouda III ordained deaconesses, as well as His Eminence Anba Moussa, Bishop of the General of Youth, but it is noticeable that the ordination of deaconesses, which both His Holiness and His Eminence, were by the laws of the Apostles' Fathers, and the list of consecrated women, approved by the Council Holy of our Coptic Orthodox Church, and it does not violate the laws of either of them

Fourth - In the session 5/22/2010 AD, (pg. 173), from the aforementioned decision book:

+ The Holy Synod, headed by His Holiness the Pope, made several decisions, including:

1- It is forbidden to wear young girls, girls, or young women, in a special dress, in the mass prayers, or to stand in the form of a chorus, in front of the women, to sing hymns, in general for the liturgical prayers, with the possibility of the participation of all the people, including women, in the general hymns of the people, with the chanters and the choir of deacons, without distinguishing them

2- Lack of resemblance, like the choirs of chants and melodies, with the clothes of deacons, priests, or ritual bishops

+ then the decisions of the Holy Synod, in this session, prohibit young girls, girls, or young women from wearing a special dress in the mass prayers, and they also prevent them from standing in the form of a choir, in front of the women, to chant melodies in the general prayers of the liturgies.

It also did not acknowledge the ordination of any of them in the rank and rank of the deacon in the Divine Liturgy, but allowed them to participate in prayer with the people, with the chanters, and with the choir of deacons, without discrimination.

+ Also, the decisions of the Council forbid the resemblance of the choirs of chants and melodies to the clothes of deacons, priests, or liturgical bishops.

Fifthly - the opinion of the thrice resposed in peace His Eminence Bishop Gregory - Bishop of Scientific Research in a question that was presented to him: "Is it permissible for women, to enter the altar, to perform cleaning work?"

+ That in the Encyclopedia of Ritual Theology, Part V (pg. 304, 305), His Eminence replied, saying: "It is not permissible for anyone other than priests and deacons to enter the altar, whether during the service or at other than service times.

1- Therefore, it is not permissible for women, nor men, other than priests and deacons, to enter the holy altar, or to carry out cleaning work, and ecclesiastical laws have stipulated that it is not permissible to touch church utensils, except for priests and deacons.

2- The ecclesiastical laws in this regard are based mainly on the commands of God in the Bible, especially in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and

Deuteronomy, which are the books of the Torah, which explained in comprehensive detail the provisions of the ritual Sharia.

3- She did not allow other than priests and deacons (the Levites), to do the cleaning, or to touch any of the altar tools and all its contents, which is especially clear in the distribution of powers among the Levites, in guarding the meeting tabernacle, and all its contents (Numbers 3:10 - 37) (Numbers 4:2-33). “And the alien who comes near shall be killed.” (Numbers 3: 10), (Numbers 1: 51).

4- Women are not permitted to enter the altar, nor to touch the utensils. Entering the altar, touching the altar utensils, and all the contents of the altar, is not permitted except to priests and deacons, who are authorized to do so by the rite of their ordination, as is expressly stated in the ritual ordination -

A - As stated in the book, The Order of Ordaining the Ranks of Priesthood: “The deacon is in the ranks of the epi-diacon, who has the right to touch the sacred vessels, so the bishop says, in the prayer of the ordination of the epi-diacon:

"O our king, show your face to your servant so-and-so, whom they offered to become an epi deacon, by acclamation, fill him with your Holy Spirit, so that he may be worthy to touch the utensils of service, and to stand before the doors of the altar, and light the lamp of your house of prayers.”

B - After completing the ordination of the Epi-diacon, the archdeacon reads to him the commandment, in which he says: “You must guard the doors of the House of

God, which is the pledge of allegiance... because you have been entrusted with touching the sacred vessels, which are for the pure service.”

+ It is clear from this that touching the holy vessels in the altar and the altar is not entitled to a man or a woman, unless he is in the rank of the epi-diacon, the vice-deacon of the perfect diacon.

+ As for cleaning the church’s floor and walls, and all its contents outside the altar, it is usually carried out by someone who holds one of the ranks of the minor diacon. Soil must be carried away from the church, and in a clean place, not trampled underfoot.

Sixth - Among the conditions for admission to the diacon service, the applicant for the diacon degree must be male:

As stated in the book of the Department of Ecclesiastical Law - Clergy - by Prof. Dr. Awni Barsoum - Professor of Ecclesiastical Law, and Personal Status at the former Seminary (p. 79):

1- Because there are no clerical degrees for women, and the principle that a seminarian should be male is a well-established and established principle since the Old Testament.

2- Thus, the natural law in this respect was sacred from the divine law, and perhaps divine wisdom, is the fact that the service of the priesthood in particular, and the clergy in general, is always linked to leadership and education, and the leadership of peoples or the mass of worshipers, is the work of male believers, as a natural law. Hence, God sanctified the natural law, by His divine law, and this one holy concept was extended in the New Testament, and the revelation says: “The man is the head of the woman.”

3- In the sense of the one who takes the image of the leader, without the woman being, rather than the man, in the Lord, and thus the masculine character of the applicant for the clergyman service has been a stable matter in the Church, from the earliest times until today.

4- What some Western assemblies, within the various groups of the Protestant sects, and the rest of the Chalcedonian churches think about making women priests is a heresy, which God has not wanted to succeed until now.

Seventhly, Prof. Dr. Awni Barsoum indicated in his book (pp. 158-159).

1- To the law (26), one of the laws of the apostle fathers: “don't lay hands on a virgin, only her purity, which makes her a virgin.

It is clear that the apostles' fathers forbade laying hands-on girls, young virgins, or widows.

2- He also referred to His Eminence, in Law (53) of the laws of the fathers of the apostles, and it clarifies who the hand should be placed upon. He refers to this in the same text, saying: “And you, bishop, raise the priest, and put your hand on his head, and the priests all stand, and the deacons, pray and swear to them, and put your hand on them, and pray for the priests and deacons to rise, as for the deaconesses, the epi-diacon. And the Augustus, we started and said for them, meaning that: “The hand is not placed on them, even if we take any of the images that have a specific shape, referring to the law (26), from the laws of the fathers the the apostles.”

3- The pure apostles did not leave the matter at this point. Rather, the laws of the fathers the apostles reverted to the law (55), and emphasized all this meaning: “A hand is not placed on a virgin, because it is not a command from the Lord, this struggle, but the secret” (That is, her struggle as a virgin, according to the intention of her heart, and the text is completed by saying: For the sake of widows, the hand is not placed on a widow.

It is noticeable that the text described the widow: “The one who has the characteristics of her husband, lives chaste, has no faults, and takes care of her household.” So not ordination for women, but consecration

4- Just as our forefathers the apostles, in (Paragraph One of the First Law) (58), acknowledged in this law that:

Women deaconesses, they do not bless, nor do anything, which priests and deacons do, rather they guard the doors only, and they serve the priests, in the place of women's baptism, because what must be this.”

A – then women deaconesses differ from male deacons in work and service, because hands are not placed on them, nor do they attain the lowest rank and priestly rank. In terms of their ordination and service

b - Nevertheless, the apostolic fathers in this apostolic law specified the work of women deaconesses, that they guard the doors, and help the priests, in baptizing older women, and nothing more.

5- In addition, it was mentioned in the book (Descolia Chapter (12), paragraph (25-27), that women in the church should not teach at all

Here is what came: “We command, that women do not teach in the church, but that you pray there, and listen to the teaching, because our Lord Jesus Christ and our Teacher, when He sent us the twelve, to teach peoples and nations, did not command women, to preach anywhere. And had he wanted to send them, he would not have been unable, because we had his mother, his sisters, Mary Magdalene, and Lazarus' sisters: Martha, Mary, Salome, and others with them. If the head of the woman is the man, then the rest of the body doesn't need to be presiding over the head.”

6- Dr. Awny also mentions in his book (pg. 157), the nineteenth law (19), of the laws of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea:

At the end of the text, he says: “Deaconesses who wear a robe, here mean those who are clothed with a modest garment that covers the whole body. And they are numbered with the common people (the people), because they did not receive the ordination of laying hands.”

The text makes two points:

A - It is more appropriate to consider women from the common people, or common servants or maids, in general, if they have been entrusted with a certain service within the church, and the text has interpreted the word (deaconesses), not as being among the ranks of the church, rather it is explained that what is meant is them. Virtuous and venerable women, inside the house of God, and he described them as the ones who wear modest clothes

b- The second is definitive, and they have no place among the church ranks, nor ordination for them, because no hands are placed upon them, they have no liturgical service, and they have deviated from the whole clerical system. and our Coptic church, as the Nicaea Church, believes in the principles and provisions of the Council of Nicaea, and its belief in this regard is firm. Hence, the outcome of these two points, brought up by the text, draws the Church's view of them.

+ It is worth mentioning that the scholar Henry Percival commented in his book on deaconesses, saying that: “If in the early ages, the church had deaconesses, it seems that they were the widows whom Saint Paul mentions, who had vowed

chastity. Their vows, it was said about them: Because when they are rebellious against Christ, they will want to marry, and they will have judgment, because they rejected the first faith” (1 Timothy 5:12).

Eighth - The Latakia Spatial Council, which convened in the year 364 AD, as some say, and others are more likely, indicated that it was held in the year 384 AD, and here is Lattakia, which was in Phrygia - formerly Constantinople, and its name was changed later, with the name Eskisehir, in Turkey

It was mentioned in Law (44), one of the laws of this Synod, the text of which says: “It is not permissible for women to enter the temple of sacrifice (the Altar).”

Ninth - The Council of Chalcedon made a great mistake, as it stipulated (the fifteenth law), among its laws, to ordain women in priestly ranks and ranks, as is clear in the book of Dr. Awni Barsoum (p. 158):

It is known that this illegal council is not recognized by our Coptic Church, nor by the rest of the churches, our brothers in the Orthodox faith.

+ However, this law referred to above, which was issued by that illegal assembly, stated that: “A deacon woman should not be ordained before she reaches forty, and she must pass a careful examination and a strict test, but if she proceeds after obtaining the blessing of ordination, and its judgment A period of service over marriage, despising the divine grace, so let any severance or deprivation, she and the man with whom she was married, be zealous.

+ This is an uncommon departure from the old tradition since the time of the messengers, that there is no ordination for women, or laying hands, and they have no condition, for the reason or justification is known. And it is subject to the fifteenth decision of the Council of Chalcedon, which instituted the status of the liturgical ordination of the deacon for the first time in the history of ecclesiastical laws.

+ Thus, we can say that the priestly ordination of girls, virgins and women in the Chalcedonian churches is an extension of what came in the Council of Chalcedon in this regard. And in violation of the laws of the fathers the apostles (Laws 26, 53, 55), as well as violating the law of the Council of Nicaea, Law (19) and what was stated in this regard.

+ Why does our church reject the heresy of the woman's priesthood and its works?!

Tenth - Some people claim that through the authority of dissolution and binding, which is granted by God to the clergy, he can legislate and give to women, unless he legislates it and God gives them gifts:

The fact that we do not deny, that God gave to the fathers the apostles and their successors from the patriarchs and the bishops fathers the power to loosen and bind, saying to them: “Truly I say, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 8). 1:18), (Matt 16:19).

And also, in another place in the book, he affirmed this gift by saying: “He whose sins you forgive will be forgiven him, and he whose sins you withhold, they are retained” (John 20:23).

1 - However, this divine authority, granted to the apostolic fathers and their successors from the patriarchs and bishops, is not an authority without limits, rather it is an authority that has limits and controls.

And that is by the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. (Jude 1:3), issued by the commandments and teachings of God, which are contained in the Bible - the sacred handed down tradition - and the church laws - and the decisions and laws of the local and ecumenical councils, which are recognized in our church. In addition to what was stated in the teachings of the Universal Church, before the division - and the teachings of our church, and the rest of the teachings of the sister churches, which were steadfast on the straight faith, and did not split against it in the year 451 AD.

If the authority of the Church, that is, the authority of the clergy in this matter, is within the limits of what is mentioned in these legislative, educational, legal and liturgical sources.

2- If we understand what God legislated, the church, i.e., the clergy, legislates it, and what God did not legislate, the church, i.e., the clergy, could not legislate it, not in the past, present or future, and this is the summary, and the correct Orthodox teaching

Therefore, the priestly authority, granted by God to the fathers the apostles, and their successors from the patriarchs and the bishops, cannot place women in priestly ranks and ranks, or give them an act of the sacrament of the great priesthood.

3 - If the churches that have priestly authority, or that do not, have given women the special priesthood and carry out its work, whether it is in the rank and rank of bishop, priest or deacon, then this act is considered a wrongful act, because it was done on the wrong use of priestly authority, and it is not in its place.

Therefore, the priesthood of a woman is considered an illegitimate and invalid priesthood, and its actions are illegal and invalid and are not completed, because God did not legislate it at all!! Therefore, everything that is built on falsehood is also false because it contradicts the commandments and teachings of God, which are related to the sacred sacrament of priesthood, which is contained in the Bible, handed down tradition, church laws, and liturgies.

Accordingly, this work is considered a heresy, one of the modern innovations in those churches. And because God condemns everyone who gave legitimacy to the illegality of the women's priesthood and its works, in those churches.

He also condemns, everyone who accepts and accepts this priesthood and its illegal and invalid works, because the priesthood of women and its works, is only formally done, not realistic and practical!!

Eleventh - The Church's view of women and men:

The Church views her daughters and sons, women and men, young and young, children, girls and boys, the same view, without distinction or discrimination, based on gender (female and male), from its foundation until the second coming of the Lord, according to what God ordained for it, and gave him examples of that.

1- The Church, since its foundation until now, does not differentiate between women and men, young women and young men, children, girls and boys, in terms of inviting them to preach the faith, and everyone who accepts it is directed to them asking them to live with it, as the Lord commanded: “The words that I speak to you are spirit and life. » (John 6:64)

2- Likewise, the call to repentance is directed to all, and it demands attention to the spiritual life, and striving in it, by applying the commandments of the Lord, prayer and fasting, and every good deed.

3- It does not reject everyone fit to join, for service, consecration and monasticism, so we find large numbers of maids next to the servants, in the field of service. However, there are consecrated women, consecrated nuns, and monks in the church

4- The church presents the ecclesiastical sacraments, and all the blessings in it, to everyone, without discrimination, but to everyone who meets the conditions, to ensure ecclesiastical and divine accountability.

5- The woman exercises her right to express her opinion regarding deacons who are ordained as priests, and monastic fathers who are ordained as fathers of bishops in dioceses.

6- However, she is elected as a member of the General Assembly and the subsidiary councils

7- We do not fail to point out that it is possible for her to be appointed or elected in ecclesiastical councils, the General Secretariat for Service, and the subsidiary councils as well.

8- In addition to the fact that the call for the salvation of the soul, and the eternal inheritance, in the kingdom of heaven, is a call to all women and men etc.

9- There is no objection to the Church, for a woman to be next to and like men, or instead of them, in terms of assuming private and public positions, in all aspects of their specializations, in the local and international community.

10. Even in the societal problem of inheritance between sisters and brothers, the Church teaches that discrimination in inheritance on the grounds of sex is wrong and a sin, and that women must be equal to men, in the application of the Lord's commandment which says: "There is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3: 8).

But if the woman or the sister is more in need than the man or her brother, she takes more than him, as stated in the Acts of the Apostles: "And they had everything in common. And possessions and possessions they divided, as each one had a need" (Acts 2:44-45).

After all these aspects mentioned above, in which women are equal to men, sisters to brothers.

Twelfth: Some people demand equality for women with men, about the priesthood and its work:

This is due to a several reasons, including:

1 - Because the woman did not create herself as a female, rather God created her as a female. Because she was created female and not male, this does not give her the right, or give anyone else, to claim the special sacramental priesthood and carry out its work. Because God did not legislate, or call some of the women to the private sacramental priesthood and its works, as it legislated and called some of the men to the priesthood and its works in the two covenants.

2 - Likewise, you will find there some people, who demand the ordination of some women in priestly ranks and ranks, to achieve the principle of equality between women and men, in priestly ordination and carrying out their duties.

On the one hand, the principle of equality between women and men, in priestly ordination and its activities, is a principle that God did not approve of, and therefore he did not legislate it or invite them to it, as he legislated and called some men to the special sacramental priesthood, and to carry out its work in all sources of legislation.

Rather, it legislated and called the woman and equated her with the man, in terms of the gender principle. Because God created in terms of sex two types: male and female. He also equated them in function and responsibility, so he made the male the father and the responsible, and the female the mother and the response as well. This is for the sake of mating and procreation, and the survival of the human offspring on earth, as God previously did

3- Concerning the misunderstanding and misuse of freedom, which is given by God as a gift to all human beings, male and female, without discrimination, some claim the special sacramental priesthood and its works, for women as well as for men. We do not deny that God gave freedom to all human beings, male and female, without discrimination. However, we must not forget that the freedom that He gave to all human beings without discrimination is freedom related to all the divine laws that were mentioned in the Holy Bible, including the legislation related to the priesthood. Private and his works are explicitly restricted to men and not to women

So, the freedom that God gave to humans is a freedom that has divine conditions and controls, and these divine conditions and controls did not allow the private priesthood and its actions for women, just as they allowed private priesthood and its actions for men.

Hence, the demand for a special priesthood and its actions for women, like men, is a wrong understanding of freedom, because it contradicts the divine conditions and controls, which are contained in the Holy Bible, including the legislation regarding the special priesthood and its actions, which are restricted to men rather than women.

4- In addition, some people demand a priesthood for women like men, based on the verse that says we are all: “kings and priests” (Revelation 1:6), (Revelation 5:10), (Exodus 19:6).

It is well known that the priesthood is of two types: the first is the general spiritual priesthood, and the second is the private sacramental priesthood.

Therefore, these verses mentioned above, which came in the Book of Revelation and the Book of Exodus, are talking about:

(a) The general spiritual priesthood.

which is for all people, men and women, young men and women, children, boys and girls, and has nothing to do with the special sacramental priesthood and its works.

Accordingly, the general spiritual priesthood is based on faith in Christ (1 Peter 2:9), birth from God in baptism (John 3:3, 5), repentance while keeping God's commandments (Revelation 20:5), and offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. An example of prayer, fasting, service and doing good...etc. (1 Peter 2:5), (Heb. 13:16). Without these conditions, the Christian person is not included in the list of the general spiritual priesthood.

b - As for the private sacramental priesthood?

It is for some people, and not for all, and men only, without women and children: "No one takes this honor for himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was" (Heb 5:4).

The special sacramental priesthood is called by God, through the Church, by choosing and appointing some of the men, and not for all, like the twelve disciples (Matthew 10:1) (Mark 3:13).

And the seventy apostles (Luke 10:1), as well as the seven deacons, headed by the martyr Stephen (Acts 6:5).

In addition to the special priesthood, it is carried out by placing the existing hands on an apostolic priesthood hierarchy, and this aspect is evident in the establishment of the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, through the apostles' fathers: "While they serve the Lord and fast, said the Holy Spirit, set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I called them. So, they fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, and then let them go" (Acts 13:2-3). And the fathers had previously raised the disciples, Matthias the Apostle, in place of Judas, who sold his master (Acts 1).

Just as the special priesthood is achieved by placing the hands based on the chain of an apostolic priesthood, so it is done by ritual prayers and holy breathing, as is clear in the raising of the disciples' fathers from the Lord Christ, after His holy resurrection, from the dead, in one of His apparitions, He said to them: Peace be upon you, as the Father has sent me, so I am sending you. And when he said this: He breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit. Whoever you forgive his sins will be forgiven him, and whoever's sins you withhold will be retained" (John 20:21-23).23).

If the general spiritual priesthood is one type, the private sacramental priesthood is another type. The general spiritual priesthood is for all people, men and women, as for the private sacramental priesthood, it is for some people only men, not women, and each of them has conditions, and each of them has worked other than the other, so there is no need to deceive and confuse them.

5- One of the important reasons, on which our Coptic Church relies, in rejecting the women's priesthood and its actions, is that God in the two Testaments did not legislate this priesthood and its actions, as He legislated the priesthood and its actions of men.

Therefore, all kinds of the priesthood, from its inception in the Old Testament, until the New Testament, are of men only, not of women

A - Whether he is in the patriarchal priesthood: the example of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Job

b - Likewise in the Levitical priesthood:

The example of Aaron the High Priest, and his sons, the fathers of the priests and their ilk

C - In addition to the priesthood of the New Testament:

The example of the twelve disciples, the seventy apostles, Saint Paul the Apostle, and their successors from patriarchs, bishops, and priests, and the evidence for this is that in all kinds of priesthood and its times, there were women who were known for their piety, good deeds, and ability to lead.

However, God called in the patriarchal priesthood: Our father Adam, and he did not call our mother Eve. Noah called the righteous and did not leave his wife. And he called Abraham the father of the fathers, and he did not call his wife Sarah, our mother...etc.

And in the Levitical priesthood: God called Aaron as the high priest, and did not call his wife, and even Mary, his sister and the sister of Moses the Prophet, was not

called to the priesthood, but was called and appointed as a prophetess. On the other hand, the sons of Aaron called their fathers priests, and they were ordained by the hand of Moses the prophet, and the daughters of Aaron were not called to the priesthood.

Thus, in the priesthood of the New Testament: The Lord called the twelve disciples, the seventy apostles, and after them the Apostle Paul, chief priests, and the Virgin Mary was not called the mother of Christ, who is the spiritual mother of all Those who believes in him, that she is just a deaconess in the rank and rank of a deaconess. Likewise, he called the three sons of Cleopas or Alphaeus, along with the rest of the twelve disciples, to be chief priests, and did not call their mother Mary, the sister of the Virgin Mary, to be even a deacon, in the rank and rank of a deaconess.

6- On the other hand, the Holy Bible did not say about the Lord Christ that he was a priestess or high priestess, but rather said about him: “a great priest” (Heb. 10:21), “a high priest like this, who sat at the right hand of the throne of the greatness in the heavens” (Heb. 8: 1)

And the fact that the book did not say about the Lord Christ that he is a priestess or high priestess, rather it said about him that he is a priest and a high priest, and this confirms that the special sacramental priesthood is a priesthood for men, not for women.

7- Christ gave the sacrament of the priesthood, his authority, and his leadership, to the fathers, the apostles, and men after his holy resurrection, and not to women,

saying to them: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you. And when he said this, he breathed on them, and said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit. Whoever you forgive his sins will be forgiven him, and whoever retains his sins will be retained” (John 20:22-23), (Matthew 18:18) and (Matthew 16:19).

And the fact that Christ gave the sacrament of the priesthood, his authority, and his leadership to the apostles’ fathers and their successors, the patriarchs and the men’s bishops, and did not give it to women, or share with them women in this gift, this proves that the special sacramental priesthood and its works are for men only, not for women.

8- Nevertheless, Christ handed the seven sacraments of the Church, including the sacrament of the Eucharist, to his disciples, apostles, and their male successors, patriarchs and bishops, and not to women, saying to them: “Do this in remembrance” (Luke 22:19), (1 Corinthians 11:23-25). This indicates that the secret of the priesthood and its actions are for men, not for women

9- Jesus did not give his mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is considered the holiest person on earth, any priestly rank and rank. Rather, he gave her spiritual children, the twelve disciples, and the seventy apostolic fathers, the special sacramental priesthood, his authority, and his leadership. This is the most important and greatest proof that the special priesthood is for men, not for women at all, and at the forefront of them is the Virgin, the Mother of God.

10- The Lord Christ, his twelve disciples, and his seventy apostles, and with them the Apostle Paul did not command the appointment of women in priestly ranks and ranks, but rather recommended them to appoint some of the men in the three priestly ranks and ranks.

Therefore, the eleven disciples set up Matthias the apostle, instead of Judas Iscariot, who sold his master (Acts 1:21-26). Likewise, the fathers appointed the apostles, Barnabas and Saul, each of them apostles, after laying hands on them (Acts 2:13,3).

Just as the fathers set up the apostles as apostles, joining the priesthood and its leadership, so they set up successors for them from the patriarchs and bishops, such as St. Anianus, the first patriarch of the See of Alexandria, and St. Timothy the bishop, as well as St. Titus, the disciple of Paul the Apostle, and the bishops of the seven churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation.

Nevertheless, they appointed men, in the rank and rank of the presbytery, the fathers of priests (Acts 14:23), and in addition to that they set up servant deacons, in the rank and rank of deaconess, like the martyr Stephen, and with him the rest of the seven deacons (Acts 6:1-8).

It is noticeable that all those whom the fathers the apostles established, or whom they recommended residing in the present and the future, in the priestly ranks and ranks, were all men, not women.

11- We should not fail to point out an important aspect, which is that the man is the head of the woman, and not the woman is the head of the man, and this is according to the teachings of the Holy Bible: “Women, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord, because the man is the head of the woman, just as Christ is also the head of the church...” (Eph 5:22-23).

And the man being the head of the woman, and not the woman being the head of the man, that is why men were called by God, in the priestly ranks and ranks, and women were never called.

Thus, Christ was called a priest and high priest, and head of the church, which is the community of believers, because he is the heavenly bridegroom to it.

12- The Bible does not allow women to teach liturgical education in the church: “I do not permit women. To teach, and not to rule over a man, but to be in silence” (1 Timothy 2:12). This is because that the man is the head of the woman, and the man being the head of the woman, he is ordained in the priestly ranks and ranks, and everyone, including the woman, knows, because teaching in the church is a work of the holder of the sacrament of the priesthood, not the work of a woman, because it is not established in the priestly ranks and ranks. Therefore, you should not teach in church

13- It is noticeable on the local and ecumenical councils, which met both locally and ecumenically, and in which the local and ecumenical leaders are present, to study and treat faith and pastoral problems, especially for the local and ecumenical

church. There was not a single woman in any of them, rather all of its leaders and members were men, and important decisions and laws were taken, which are in force in the Church until now and can never be dispensed with!!

14- In addition to all of the above, some circumstances happen to women from time to time, such as menstruation or menstruation (Leviticus 12:2), (Leviticus 15:25-29), childbirth (Leviticus 12:2, 4, 5), and relationships with spouses (Leviticus 15:16-18), in which in all of them, the Lord forbids approaching the temple, the holy places, and the sanctuaries, for different periods, and this is by the teachings of the Bible, church laws, and her liturgy

Because women, in those circumstances, are not prepared as they should, so because of these circumstances that happen to women, which prevent them from approaching the temple and the holy places and holy places, the Church did not give the priesthood and its works to women, but to men.

15- Despite all this, there are obstacles during pregnancy and breastfeeding that are specific to women. So, what do women do during these periods, do they leave the service of their homes, breastfeeding and raising children, for the sake of the priesthood and its work?! I don't think. Therefore, for these aforementioned aspects, our Coptic Orthodox Church rejects the priesthood of women and its works!!

In conclusion:

* So, the idea of calling that the rights of women are inferior to the rights of men, due to their not being ordained in the ranks and ranks of the special priesthood like men, in my opinion this idea is incorrect and unrealistic!!

Because God gave women everything they could do, but he did not give them the priesthood with all its ranks and ranks, because there are reasons in their formation, and other circumstances, that prevent them from being ordained in the ranks and ranks of the special priesthood, and doing its work to approach the sanctuaries and holy places.

Therefore, the idea of demanding the ordination of women, in all the ranks and ranks of the special priesthood, to carry out their duties on an equal footing with men, is a wrong idea, a wrong decision, and it cannot be applied in practice in our Coptic Orthodox Church, to maintain the once-Muslim faith of the saints (Jude 3).

Especially since the idea of legal marriage, between men and women, deviated from the path that God planned and established for it

* Based on the wrong understanding of freedom and the principle of marriage equality, some people have introduced illegal marriage, that is, same-sex marriage, males with males, and females with females. Thus, from the wrong understanding of freedom, and the principle of equality of women with men, in the priestly ranks and ranks to carry out work, some Western churches introduced the ordination of women in priestly ranks and ranks. Some, who have been residing in the private

priesthood and its jobs, may find that they are married in a same-sex marriage, a woman with a woman.

* There is no remedy for the heresy of the woman's priesthood, and the errors that result from it, except by immediately stopping new ordination and declaring that this priesthood is illegitimate and void, because even if the ordination took place outwardly, it does not take place in reality.

* Therefore, all the priestly works completed by women are not done, while people are made aware of the danger of this heresy, their faith, their relationship with God, and their eternal salvation.

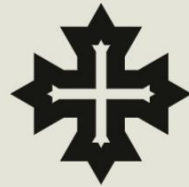
* We pray to God, for the leaders of the churches who accepted this heresy, and gave it legitimacy, by the ordination of women to priestly ranks and ranks, next to the men. That they stop these wrong actions, and offer sincere repentance to God, in the hope that He will forgive them their sins. They must also strip those who have been ordained in the priesthood of women, to stop the priestly works that they offer to people, which leads to very serious harm to them, their spiritual life and their eternal future.

We pray to the Lord, to preserve the faith of our church, and to our God eternal glory forever.

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**Anba Agathon,
Bishop of Maghaha and El-Adwa,
and President of the College of Seminary Alumni Association**

Translated by



True coptic orthodoxy

"the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"

Jude 1:3